

.45 Watershed

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN - STEP 1
ACTIVITY OBJECTIVES

Name (MFP)
Sonoma-Gerlach
Activity
Watershed
Objective Number
W-1

Objective: W-1

Preservation and improvement of quality water necessary to support current and future land uses.

Rationale:

Most activities on the land require water for their existence. Much of the water within the planning area falls initially on public lands and then flows over the surface or percolates underground to users at lower elevations. If this water is not maintained in a high quality state it may become unusable by groundwater and downstream users. Consequently it is important that Bureau activities do not significantly degrade water quality where quality is high and, if possible, improve quality where low. According to Executive Order 12088 issued October 13, 1978, it is the responsibility of all Federal agencies to ensure that all necessary actions are taken for the prevention, control and abatement of environmental pollution with respect to Federal facilities and activities under control of the agency. Section 208 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (Clean Water Act) of 1972 establishes the state and local governments as the controls on non-point source pollution. The Nevada Water Pollution Control Regulations of February 1978 establish water quality standards which must be maintained in Nevada. Complete inventory of the water in the planning area is needed to adequately assess the degree of compliance with the Nevada regulations.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN
RECOMMENDATION-ANALYSIS-DECISION

Name (MFP)

Sonoma-Gerlach

Activity

Watershed 1.1

Overlay Reference

Step 1

Step 3

Recommendation: W 1.1

MFP 1

Prevent Bureau and Bureau-authorized activities from degrading water quality beyond established standards as specified in the Nevada Water Pollution Control Regulations of 1978.

Employ feasible Best Management Practices as outlined in the Handbook of Best Management Practices, State of Nevada, in all public land activities (providing the BMPs do not conflict with BLM policy and procedures).

Rationale:

The Federal Water Pollution Control Act of 1972 establishes the states and local governments as the controls on non-point pollution, the class of pollution most likely to be generated by Bureau and Bureau authorized activities. The State of Nevada enacted the Nevada Water Pollution Control Regulations in February 1978 which establishes standards for water quality in the state. It is the Bureau's responsibility to abide by the state's quality standards and prevent degradation of water quality as a result of Bureau and Bureau authorized actions. Best Management Practices can be employed to minimize pollution by surface disturbing actions.

To date, no water quality sampling has occurred in the planning area. Therefore, it is not known which waters are exceeding prescribed standards.

Support:

Inventory is necessary to determine water quality over the planning area. All resource activities must sufficiently monitor their actions to determine their contribution to water pollution. Actions should be modified if determined to be significant contributors.

Multiple Use Recommendation

Prevent Bureau and Bureau-authorized activities from degrading water quality beyond established standards as specified in the Nevada Water Pollution Control Regulations of 1978 and the Memorandum of Understanding of December 1980 between BLM and the State of Nevada, Division of Environmental Protection, concerning diffuse source water pollution and the Nevada State 208 Water Quality Plan.

Employ feasible Best Management Practices as outlined in the Handbook of Best Management Practices, State of Nevada, in all public land activities (providing the BMPs do not conflict with BLM policy and procedures).

Rationale

Water is an integral and necessary part of all resource activity requirements.

The legal right to water must be pursued in order to gain legal title to the needed quantities.

Demands upon existing waters on public lands will increase. The Bureau must insure that needed quantities are acquired by appropriation, purchase or by other appropriate direction.

DISTRICT MANAGER'S DECISION:

Accept the Area Manager's recommendation and rationale.

Recommendation: W 1.2

Protect the water quality within municipal watersheds used by the communities of Lovelock, Golconda, Imlay, Gerlach, Empire and Winnemucca by: (1) reserving the public lands within these watersheds and (2) transferring title of private lands within these areas to public ownership, for reservation, through exchange or purchase. Reserve is defined as retention of public lands, protection by withdrawal for mineral entry, and management for compatible uses.

Rationale:

Four communities within the planning area, Lovelock, Golconda, Imlay and Gerlach, depend completely on surface water flow from nearby mountains for domestic water. Maintenance of high quality water in these watersheds is extremely important to these communities. In addition, the cities of Winnemucca and Empire have relied on surface water in the past, but have since converted to groundwater sources. Lowering water tables and increases in the cost of pumping water will likely revive the use of surface water in these communities in the future. Development within these watersheds could pose a threat to water quality, therefore, the public lands within these areas must be protected through a reservation action. In order to assure that no activity occurs on private lands which might be detrimental to water quality, any private land within these areas should be transferred into public ownership through exchange or purchase and subsequently reserved.

Examples where this recommendation could constrain other activities should future water quality investigations show them to be incompatible are (1) livestock and wild horse grazing, (2) mineral exploration and development, (3) off-road vehicles, (4) road construction and use, (5) recreational developments.

Support:

Public lands within these watersheds must be reserved as municipal watersheds. Exchange or purchase action must be accomplished to transfer those private lands within the watersheds to public status and then subsequently reserved. Immediate fire rehabilitation measures must take place should wildfire occur within these watersheds.

Multiple Use Recommendation

Combine with Multiple Use Recommendation Lands 2.5 and 2.6. See that recommendation.

DISTRICT MANAGER'S DECISION

Retain in public ownership the following lands within the municipal hydrologic basins described as follows. Non-public lands in these municipal watersheds will be given priority for acquisition.

Winnemucca

hydrologic basin for
Water Canyon Creek

T. 35 N., R. 38 E.,

Section 2, S1/2

Sections 12 and 14

1400 - 3500

T. 35 N., R. 39 E.,

Sections 7, 18, and 17

Golconda

hydrologic basin for
Pole Creek

T. 35 N., R. 39 E.

Sections 32, 28, 20, and 23

Section 14, N1/2, SW1/4, N1/2 SE1/4

Section 16, N1/2, N1/2 S1/2

Sections 12 and 7

Section 34, N1/2

Section 26, NW1/4

5360 - acres

Imlay

hydrologic basin for
Prince Royal Canyon

T. 32 N., R. 34 E.

Section 28, SW1/4

Section 32, E1/2

T. 31 N., R. 34 E.

Section 4, Lot 1, Lot 2, SE1/4 SE1/4, SW1/4, SE1/4

Section 8, SE1/4

Section 14, N1/2, N1/2, S1/2

Section 10

1180 acres

1300 acres

1120 acres

Lovelock

T. 29 N., R. 33 E.

Section 28, S1/2, SE1/4 NE1/4, W1/2 NW1/4, SE1/4 NW1/4

Sections 33 and 34.

2200 acres

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN - STEP 1
ACTIVITY OBJECTIVES

Name (MFP)
Sonoma-Gerlach
Activity
Watershed
Objective Number
W-2

Objective: W-2

Provision of adequate water to support public land uses.

Rationale:

Most activities on the land require water for their existence. Section .35 Water Resources of the Blue Wing, Sonoma, and Buffalo Hills URAs identifies _____ acre feet of water required for the consumptive uses on the public lands, and _____ cubic feet per second (CFS) and _____ acre feet for nonconsumptive uses. These uses include amounts for livestock, wildlife, wild horses, recreation, and aquatic habitat. Points of use are streams, springs, and reservoirs scattered over the planning area. Presently no water is guaranteed to the public in the form of a certificate of water right issued by the State of Nevada.

UNITED STATES
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BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN
RECOMMENDATION-ANALYSIS-DECISION

Name (MFP)

Sonoma-Gerlach

Activity

Watershed 2.1

Overlay Reference

Step 1

Step 3

Recommendation: W 2.1

MFP I

Appropriate sufficient water on public lands through permit, adjudication or purchase processes as provided by Federal and State Water Law or other appropriate direction to support the uses of the public lands for wild horses, wildlife, aquatic habitat, livestock, and recreation.

Rationale:

The Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (Sec. 102[a][8]) establishes that the public lands will be managed in a manner that . . . provide food and habitat for fish and wildlife and domestic animals . . . outdoor recreation and human occupancy and use. Section .45 Watershed of the Sonoma, Blue Wing, and Buffalo Hills URAs identifies that none of the water considered necessary to support uses of the public lands is actually granted the public through a water right. The right to water must be actively pursued in order to gain legal title to the needed quantities.

Because of the state's doctrine of prior appropriation, much of the water has been previously granted to private interests and may not be available for public needs. The Public Water Reserve Executive Order of 1926 has been interpreted by Department of Interior Solicitors as reserving springs and seeps occurring on public lands, and exceeding 200 gallons/day, as having a federal reservation if not appropriated through State Water Law prior to the Executive Order. A court determination of ownership will be necessary to resolve this question. The technical feasibility of this recommendation is impossible to assess due to these uncertainties.

Support:

Support will be necessary from all activities to document water needs and areas of need. Accurate quantification of the water outputs and needs are not available and requires additional inventory.

Multiple Use Recommendation

Acquire or provide sufficient water on public lands through permit, adjudication or purchase processes as provided by Federal and State Water Law and/or other appropriate direction to support the uses of the public lands for wild horses, wildlife, aquatic habitat, livestock and recreation.

Rationale

Water is an integral and necessary part of all resource activity requirements.

The legal right to water must be pursued in order to gain legal title to the needed quantities.

Demands upon existing waters on public lands will increase. The Bureau must insure that needed quantities of acquired by appropriation, purchase or by other appropriate direction.

DISTRICT MANAGER'S DECISION:

Accept the Area Manager's recommendation and rationale.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN - STEP 1
ACTIVITY OBJECTIVES

Name (MFP)

Sonoma-Gerlach

Activity

Watershed

Objective Number

W-3

Objective: W-3

Reduction of soil loss and associated flood and sediment damage on public lands caused by accelerated (man-induced) wind and water erosion.

Rationale:

.45 Watershed of the Sonoma, Blue Wing, and Buffalo Hills URAs identifies only 31,539 acres of the area inventoried or .8% as presently being in stable erosion condition. The remaining acres are in other stages of erosion ranging from slight to severe. Under the same land use and management intensity in 15 years the stable acreages are predicted to be 24,145 acres or .6%. This represents a poor situation which will worsen if land use is not changed. Causes of this situation are attributed to activities of man which reduce or remove vegetative cover such as, overutilization of the vegetative cover by livestock, disturbance of cover by mineral exploration and extraction, and off-road vehicle activity. Soil loss has many adverse impacts associated with it. Among these are loss of fertile top soil and productivity, degradation of water and air quality, damage to public and private developments such as fences, roads and agricultural lands, and damage to riparian and wetland habitat. Studies show that the maintenance of 70% ground cover (including vegetation, litter and small rock) will eliminate accelerated erosion.

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MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN
RECOMMENDATION-ANALYSIS-DECISION

Name (MFP)

Sonoma-Gerlach

Activity

Watershed 3.1

Overlay Reference

Step 1

Step 3

MFP I

Recommendation: W 3.1

Establish as a goal of all grazing management plans to increase ground cover (total litter, vegetation and small rock) to at least 70% in order to reduce or eliminate accelerated (man-induced) erosion.

Rationale:

As stated in .45 Watershed of the Sonoma, Blue Wing, and Buffalo Hills URAs, research studies show that when 70% of the ground is covered by a combination of vegetation, litter and small rock, accelerated erosion will be eliminated.

Due to harsh climate in certain portions of the planning area, it may be impossible to reach the 70% ground cover value. In this situation an adjustment to a realistic goal must be made.

Support:

This recommendation must be used as a constraint in development of allotment management plans and herd management plans.

W 3.1

Multiple Use Recommendation

MFP II

Establish a goal of all grazing management plans to increase ground cover (total litter, vegetation and small rock) to at least 70% in order to reduce or eliminate accelerated (man-induced) erosion.

Rationale

70% ground cover is a realistic goal as identified in typical range site descriptions of the resource area.

MFP III

DISTRICT MANAGER'S DECISION:

Reject the recommendation.

Rationale

The goals to be reached for ground cover should be established for each allotment using the range site descriptions as a guide and through the CRMP process. To establish a 70% ground cover goal for every allotment is not consistent with range site potential. This can be strived for without an MFP decision.

MFP I

Recommendation: W 3.2

Encourage maximum vegetation cover by limiting the use of vegetation by livestock, wild horses and/or wildlife to proper use levels as recommended in the Proper Use Tables, referred to in NSO Memorandum 76-167.

Rationale:

Vegetation is the major force tending to hold soil in place and retard erosion. Overutilization of vegetative cover by livestock, wild horses and/or wildlife is a major factor contributing to the deteriorated erosion condition. By limiting utilization of the vegetation to proper use levels, vigor will be maintained and litter production will be increased. Therefore plants will be able to adequately perform their soil stabilizing function.

The assumption is made that adequate vigor can be maintained by grazing at proper use levels.

Support:

Use by livestock, wild horses and wildlife on the vegetation resource must be consistent with the prescribed proper use levels.

MFP II Multiple Use Recommendation

This recommendation was combined with Range Management Multiple Use Recommendation 1.3.

MFP III DISTRICT MANAGER'S DECISION:

Reject the recommendation.

Rationale

Use levels established in I.M. 76-167 will be established as objectives and discussed in the CRMP process. As a result of the CRMP process these levels may vary from the proper use tables in NSO memo 76-167 when other resources are adequately considered.

Recommendation: W 3.3

Eliminate all surface disturbing activities from (a) acreage identified as having a deteriorating erosion trend (areas anticipated to increase in soil surface factor by 10 or more points in 15 years) and (b) acreage in critical or severe erosion condition (soil surface factor [SSF] of more than 60). Prohibition of surface disturbing activities should continue until follow-up study indicates that SSF will increase by a factor of less than 10 in 15 years or that the SSF is reduced below 61.

Rationale:

Section .45 Watershed of the Sonoma, Blue Wing, and Buffalo Hills URAs identifies the need to protect areas which have a deteriorating trend in erosion condition and areas which are in a critical or severe erosion condition. These classifications represent locations which if not protected will continue highly accelerated soil erosion. Due to the sensitivity of these locations, surface disturbing activities which loosen the soil and/or adversely impact vegetation must be eliminated wherever possible until such time as conditions improve to a level that surface disturbing activities may resume.

An alternative which was considered involves the elimination of long-term surface disturbance such as associated with mining but allows the continued foraging by livestock, wild horses and wildlife provided that the subject areas are annually deferred from grazing from April 1 to July 15 (or to the seed ripe date for the management species as established in the grazing system covering the subject areas). The spring deferrment would provide maximum opportunity for improved vigor and reproduction of the vegetative cover. This alternative was selected because it would allow some surface disturbance by foraging animals to continue in these sensitive areas. Also litter deposition would be reduced since some of the plant material would be consumed and removed from the sites.

This recommendation assumes that current and detailed SSF data is available.

Support:

Mineral exploration and development, livestock and wild horse use, off-road vehicle use should be eliminated from these areas. Wildfire occurring in these areas should be actively suppressed to minimize destruction of vegetative cover. Use of heavy equipment in blading of fire lines should not be employed. Where SSF data is nonexistent or of questionable reliability, SSF inventories should be accomplished.

MFP II

Multiple Use Recommendation: W 3.3

Reject the recommendation.

Reasons

Soil Surface Factors in the planning area are presently based upon ten year old data that was collected on a broad scale basis.

High SSF if based on current adequate data can be used in management decisions, however, existing data is not adequate enough to justify elimination of all surface disturbing activities.

MFP III DISTRICT MANAGER'S DECISION:

Accept the Area Manager's recommendation and rationale.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN
RECOMMENDATION-ANALYSIS-DECISION

Name (MFP)
Sonoma-Gerlach
Activity
Watershed 3.4
Overlay Reference
Step 1 W-3.4 Step 3

MFP | Recommendation: W 3.4

Prohibit land disposals, any land treatment or disturbance activities which would likely result in or significant reduction (by 50% or more) the amount of vegetative cover in areas designated as having (a) "high" erosion susceptibility or (b) "high" vegetal-soil factor.

Rationale:

Based on Order 3 soil survey conducted over approximately 19% of the planning area specific areas have been identified as having a "high" erosion susceptibility. This classification reflects considerable risks of accelerating the rate of erosion by water or wind should vegetative cover be completely removed or significantly reduced. The vegetal-soil factor is a rating which gives implications as to the levels of environmental concern, development and management potential of the land surface based on data derived from Phase I Watershed erosion inventory. Those areas rated as a "high" vegetal-soil factor are considered extremely sensitive to development. As such it is extremely important to retain the vegetative cover on areas of high erosion susceptibility or vegetal-soil factor to avoid accelerating soil loss.

It is assumed that 50% reduction of the vegetative cover constitutes a significant reduction.

Support:

Support for this recommendation is by limiting location of range rehabilitation projects which would significantly reduce the existing vegetative cover, and by refraining from disposing of public lands which may have the existing vegetative cover removed or significantly reduced by subsequent private development, and by minimizing destruction of vegetative cover from wildfire. The erosion susceptibility characteristic of the soil is much more reliable than the vegetal-soil factor because the former is derived from soil survey while the latter is derived from an extensive erosion inventory. Therefore, complete soil survey over the planning area is needed to adequately determine erosion susceptibility.

This recommendation does not preclude watershed stabilization projects designed to promote vegetative cover such as rangeland seedings and prescribed burns.

Note: Attach additional sheets, if needed

(Instructions on reverse)

Form 1600-21 (April 1975)

Multiple Use Recommendation

Prohibit land treatments or disturbance activities which would result in a significant reduction (50% or more) in the amount of vegetative cover in areas designated as having "high" erosion susceptibility or "high" vegetal soil factor, unless such treatments or disturbance and the potential accelerating soil loss can be adequately mitigated through proper management or application of Best Management Practices.

Rationale

These classifications are intended to act as a flag or caution when considering proposed management actions. The decision of authorization of specific actions in areas classified as "high" erosion susceptibility or "high" vegetal soil factor must be based upon the specific proposed action and possible mitigating factors available on that specific action. These proposals can best be analyzed through an adequate EA/EIS process.

DISTRICT MANAGER'S DECISION:

Carefully consider land treatments, prohibit disturbance activities, and consider denying land disposals which would result in a significant reduction (50% or more) in the amount of vegetative cover in areas designated as having "high" erosion susceptibility or "high" vegetal soil factor, unless such treatments or disturbance and the potential accelerating soil loss can be adequately mitigated through proper management or application of Best Management Practices.

Rationale

Same as MFP 2.

MFP I

Recommendation: W 3.5

Retain public lands which lie within 100-year floodplains in public ownership. Minimize development within the 100-year floodplain boundary.

Rationale:

Whenever improvements are constructed within areas susceptible to flood inundation, the risk is present that such improvements may be damaged by subsequent flooding. Bureau policy provides that (1) direct or indirect support of floodplain development must be avoided wherever there is a practicable alternative, (2) the long- and short-term adverse impacts on natural and beneficial functions associated with the use and modification of floodplains must be avoided, to the extent possible, and (3) public lands . . . within base floodplains (100-year) must be retained under BLM administration except, (a) if parties have demonstrated the ability to maintain, restore, and protect the floodplain on a continuous basis and (b) if transfer is mandated by legislation or Presidential Order.

Data on 100-year floodplains is completely lacking. The flood-prone area boundaries shown on the Overlay represent areas which are assumed to be prone to flooding and may or may not reflect the 100-year floodplain.

Support:

Support for this recommendation is to assure that these lands are not transferred from public ownership.

Additional study and inventory should be undertaken to define the 100-year boundary.

Multiple Use Recommendation

Reject the recommendation.

Reasons

The 100 year flood plain shown on the Watershed MFP I Overlays was based upon inadequate data. It is stated in the rationale that information on the 100 year flood plain for the Humboldt River is completely lacking. Assumed flood prone boundaries which may or may not reflect the 100 year flood plain is shown on the overlays.

Disposal recommendations within this flood prone area will consider the implication of disposal as it is related to potential flooding. Disposals that would lead to potential high flood damaging situations will be disallowed.

MFP III

DISTRICT MANAGER'S DECISION:

Accept the Area Manager's recommendation and rationale.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN
RECOMMENDATION-ANALYSIS-DECISION

Name (MFP)

Sonoma-Gerlach

Activity

Watershed

Overlay Reference

Step 1

Step 3

Recommendation: W 3.6

MFP

Reduce flood and sediment damage which is sustained by roads and trails through an active maintenance program employing the use of redesign, blading, graveling, water barring, spur ditching and/or installing of culverts.

Rationale:

As stated in .45 Watershed section of the Sonoma, Blue Wing, and Buffalo Hills URAs, improper design and/or maintenance of roads has contributed to deterioration of watershed conditions. Road surfaces are normally bare of vegetation, highly compacted and resistant to infiltration. Much of the precipitation roads receive, therefore, runs off. Without water bars, culverts, spur ditches, graveling or blading to divert the runoff water from the roadway, serious erosion problems result. Maintenance of roads is necessary to maintain them in good condition and reduce flood and sediment damage. The following roads are in need of periodic maintenance:

Blue Wing #2084
Poker Brown #2060
Rattlesnake #2062
Winnemucca Lake #2093
Spaulding Canyon #2018
Panther Canyon #2031 &
#2031A
Kitten Springs #2089

Willow Creek #2000
Pole Creek #2079
Rodeo Creek #2064
Fox Mountain #2056
Donnelly Mountains #2088
High Rock Lake #2054
Rock Springs #2055
Buffalo Hills #2057

In addition, there are several thousand miles of trails which are also in need of maintenance.

Support:

Support is necessary to conduct an annual, maintenance inventory and maintenance program.

Note: Attach additional sheets, if needed

(Instructions on reverse)

Form 1600-21 (April 1975)

W 3.6

WFP II
Multiple Use Recommendation

Reduce flood and sediment damage which is sustained by roads and trails through an active maintenance program employing the use of redesign, blading, graveling, water barring, spur ditching, and/or installing of culverts on Bureau roads and through proper stipulation requirements on non-Bureau road right-of-way applications.

The actions will be in accordance with the Interim Management Policy for areas under wilderness review.

Rationale

Poor road condition or lack of maintenance has contributed to deterioration of watershed conditions. Maintenance of roads is necessary to maintain them in good condition and reduce flood and sediment damage.

Support

ATROW

III
DISTRICT MANAGER'S DECISION:

Accept the recommendation.

Rationale

An active road maintenance program will be a standard operating procedure for the District.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN
RECOMMENDATION-ANALYSIS-DECISION

Name (MFP)

Sonoma-Gerlach

Activity

Watershed 3.7

Overlay Reference

Step 1

Step 3

Recommendation: W 3.7

MFP 1

Improve desirable watershed cover primarily in the big sagebrush type through the use of prescribed burning to eliminate big sagebrush overstory and enhance the understory vegetation.

Rationale:

Certain shrub species such as big sagebrush tend toward domination of certain plant communities by closing in the canopy and suppressing the understory vegetation. Usually the understory plants are composed of grasses and forbs - the former being important watershed protection.

According to .45 Watershed section of the Sonoma, Blue Wing, and Buffalo Hills URAs, fire occurring during the spring or late fall when moisture levels in soil and vegetation are high will not seriously damage the understory vegetation, but will kill undesirable overstory vegetation. Therefore, prescribed burning should be employed where sufficient understory is present to maintain acceptable cover after the overstory has been removed.

Support:

Additional inventory of suitable sites is required to identify potential sites for prescribed burning.

Support is required in the planning and implementation stages of the prescribed burning program into providing rest from livestock and wild horse grazing until vegetation has sufficiently recovered. Soil survey is necessary in order to determine range site information.

*Prescribed
fire*

Note: Attach additional sheets, if needed

(Instructions on reverse)

W 3.7

Multiple Use Recommendation

MFP II

As suitable big sagebrush sites are identified with the potential for vegetation manipulation designed to improve desirable watershed cover, consider the use of prescribed burning to eliminate big sagebrush overstory and enhance the understory vegetation.

Rationale

The methods of prescribed burning in big sagebrush communities designed to improve vegetation conditions can be an effective management tool.

All vegetation manipulation will be part of an activity plan that has been developed through a coordinated planning effort.

MFP III

DISTRICT MANAGER'S DECISION:

Accept the Area Manager's recommendation and rationale.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN
RECOMMENDATION-ANALYSIS-DECISION

Name (MFP)	Sonoma-Gerlach
Activity	Watershed 3.8
Overlay Reference	
Step 1	Step 3

MFP Recommendation: W 3.8

Rehabilitate areas which have had protective vegetative cover destroyed by wildfire, flood or mechanical disturbance. For wildfires, treatment should be initiated on the ground within 90 days of the fire. For others action should begin as soon as possible after the event. Utilize seeding and other watershed stabilization techniques as required. Seed mixture should include native perennial grasses and/or species which are exotic but have previously been introduced into the ecosystem. Rehabilitation must be protected from grazing until adequate seedling establishment has been attained.

Rationale:

Areas stripped of vegetation by fire, or flood or mechanical means causes the soil to be vulnerable to erosion by wind and water. As soon as possible after the event, steps must be taken to restore the vegetative cover. It is Bureau policy that in the case of wildfire that on-the-ground treatment must begin within 90 days of the fire. Perennial grasses are the most reliable watershed cover.

Some areas may not be feasible to seed because of soil or topography or limitations, or because they are too small. Soil examination is required to identify "seedability" of the area.

Support:

Support is required from all activities involved in the rehabilitation planning process.

Fire
Rehab

Multiple Use Recommendation

Rehabilitate areas which have had protective vegetative cover destroyed by wildfire, flood or mechanical disturbance. For wildfires, treatment should be initiated on the ground within 90 days of the fire. For others action should begin as soon as possible after the event. Utilize seeding and other watershed stabilization techniques as required. Seed mixture should include native perennial grasses and/or species which are exotic but have previously been introduced into the ecosystem. Rehabilitation must be protected from grazing until adequate seedling establishment has been attained.

Rationale

Recommendation is a basic restatement of Bureau policy.

Support

Soil
Contracting

DISTRICT MANAGER'S DECISION:

Reject the recommendation.

Rationale

The recommendation is standard operating procedure for the District.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN - STEP 1
ACTIVITY OBJECTIVES

Name (MFP)

Sonoma-Gerlach

Activity

Watershed

Objective Number

W-4

Objective: W-4

Preservation of threatened, endangered or sensitive plant species and/or improvement of their habitats.

Rationale:

According to .34 Vegetation section of the Sonoma, Blue Wing, and Buffalo Hills URAs, the planning area harbors several species of plants which are being strongly considered for proposed Federal listing as threatened or endangered plants due to their relative scarceness and/or potential for extinction. One species is currently on the State of Nevada's critically endangered list. Other species in the planning area are considered sensitive because of their rarity in the Great Basin Region.

The continued preservation and possible improvement of the existing populations and habitats of these species must be considered in all public land management activities.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN
RECOMMENDATION-ANALYSIS-DECISION

Name (MFP)

Sonoma-Gerlach

Activity

Watershed 4.1

Overlay Reference

Step 1 W-4.1 Step 3

Recommendation: W 4.1

Prevent any surface disturbing action or other management action which would result in the destruction of existing populations of Federally listed or State listed endangered, threatened or sensitive plant, any plant proposed for such status. Establish the locations of occurrence of any such plants as Areas of Critical Environmental Concern.

Rationale:

.34 Vegetation section and .45 Watershed section of the Sonoma, Blue Wing, and Buffalo Hills URAs identify existing population of species which are being considered for Federally endangered or threatened status. One plant has been specifically designated by the State of Nevada as critically endangered. Other species are not considered threatened or endangered at present but, due to their rarity, could become threatened at any time. These plants are considered to be sensitive in nature.

It is Bureau policy to protect, conserve, and manage Federally and State listed or proposed listing of sensitive, endangered or threatened plants. Pending final listing, or delisting, all Federal or State proposed sensitive, endangered or threatened plant species must be afforded the full protection of the Endangered Species Act unless it is determined by the State Director on a case-by-case basis that information on the occurrence of a plant species is adequate to allow a specific action. The rareness and significance of these natural ecosystems in which these plants occur causes them to be in need of special designation of ACEC to prevent irreparable damage and/or loss.

Support:

Support is necessary for the modification of any surface disturbing activity or other management activity which adversely impacts the plants. To protect the plants and their habitats, additional inventory is needed throughout the planning area to identify new species of plants considered endangered, threatened or sensitive, to extend ranges of habitation of known plants for possible delisting and to document biological and physiological characteristics of these plants. It is Bureau policy to inventory public lands as specified under subsection 201(a) to Federal Land Policy and Management Act and identify areas requiring special management consideration to prevent irreparable damage.

Multiple Use Recommendation

Prevent any surface disturbing action or other management action which would result in the destruction of existing populations of Federally listed or State listed endangered, threatened or sensitive plant, any plant proposed for such status. Establish the locations of occurrence of any such plants as Areas of Critical Environmental Concern.

Rationale

It is Bureau policy to protect, conserve, and manage Federally and State listed on proposed listing of sensitive, endangered or threatened plants, ACEC designation will require a specific plant for each T/E plant species that will prevent irreparable damage and/or loss.

DISTRICT MANAGER'S DECISION:

Reject the recommendation. Make it a part of the District's standard operating procedures.

Rationale

An MFP decision is not required. ACEC designation will be considered as specific T&E plant sites are identified.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN - STEP 1
ACTIVITY OBJECTIVES

Name (MFP)
Sonoma-Gerlach
Activity
Watershed
Objective Number
W-5

Objective: W-5

Preservation and improvement of air quality.

Rationale:

The air resource is fluid in nature and not necessarily constrained by topographic or administrative boundaries. The air quality above the public lands has an influence on and is influenced by activities on public lands, and on other adjoining federal, state and private lands. BLM policy involves management of those activities to enhance the quality of the air resource, and to control and minimize adverse effects on, or pollution of, the atmosphere above BLM lands. It is the policy of BLM to manage the air resource within acceptable air quality standards prescribed by federal, state, and local laws and regulations and to improve existing air quality whenever possible.

Congress has demonstrated its concern for protection of the air resource through passage of the Clean Air Act of 1963, the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 and the Clean Air Act of 1977 (P.L. 95-95).

According to .31 B Air Quality and .45 Watershed of the Sonoma, Blue Wing and Buffalo Hills URAs. Wind blown particulates are the most serious air pollutant in the planning area.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN
RECOMMENDATION-ANALYSIS-DECISION

Name (MFP)

Sonoma-Gerlach

Activity

Watershed 5.1

Overlay Reference

Step 1

Step 3

Recommendation: W 5.1

MFP I

Prevent Bureau and Bureau-authorized activities from degrading air quality beyond established standards as specified in the Nevada Ambient Air Quality Standards.

Rationale:

The Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 specifies the protection of air and atmospheric quality on BLM lands in Sec. 102 (a)(8) and compliance with state and federal laws in Sec. 202 (c)(8). FLPMA also requires an active role in preventing air quality violations on BLM lands in Sec. 302(c). The Clean Air Act of 1977 has specific requirements for the federal land managers to protect the air over lands under their jurisdiction.

According, Bureau and Bureau-authorized activities must be conducted so as to minimize introduction of pollutants. Wind blown particulate matter is the most serious and wild-spread pollutant within the planning area.

Humboldt County Commissioners and City of Winnemucca officials have repeatedly maintained that much of Winnemucca's failure to meet established air quality standards (Winnemucca is a non-attainment area) is in fact related to and directly caused by wild blown dust particles from public lands. They mention the Black Rock Desert in particular.

Consequently activities should minimize the amount of new surface disturbance such as clearing off of vegetative cover. Situations where surface disturbance has previously occurred should be stabilized through seeding or other appropriate action.

Support:

Support is necessary from all activities which may cause degradation of air quality to assure compliance with the Nevada Ambient Air Quality Standards.

W 5.1

Multiple Use Recommendation

MFP II

Prevent Bureau and Bureau-authorized activities from degrading air quality beyond established standards as specified in the Nevada Ambient Air Quality Standards.

Rationale

Bureau policy and a requirement of law.

DISTRICT MANAGER'S DECISION:

MFP III

Reject the recommendation.

Rationale

This is standard Bureau policy and no MFP decision is needed.